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JAMES HENRY DUNCAN.





In Memoriam.

JAMES HENRY DUNCAN.

[*James H. Duncan*]
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JAMES HENRY DUNCAN.

I.

PARENTAGE AND EARLY YEARS.

OFTENTIMES a man closes a life not sufficiently eventful or marked in character to demand a public biography, yet so valuable and highly sustained, and so precious in its memory, as to call for a permanent record for the sake of his kindred and posterity.

This Memorial of Mr. Duncan is not merely a tribute of affection and respect to his memory, but is designed to perpetuate in his family the example of his pure and upright life, and to leave to them some clear picture of the place he filled in his generation, and of his influence upon it.

This will be done not so much by giving a minute account of his life, as by transcribing the spontaneous expressions of opinion and feeling, offered from many sources at the time of his death. When a man has spent a long life in one community, and has largely shared in its affairs, the estimate it makes at that time is perhaps more just and accurate than

that from any other source. This is specially true in the case of Mr. Duncan, who was pre-eminently a citizen; while the length of his life and its public character shut off the possibility of a false judgment.

It is seldom in our shifting American society that any individual is so thoroughly identified with a community as was Mr. Duncan with the town of Haverhill. His maternal ancestor, William White, was one of the first settlers, and in 1642, with five others, signed the deed by which the Indian chiefs — Passaquo and Saggahew — conveyed to its future inhabitants, the territory of which Haverhill is now a part. The White family continues here in unbroken descent, Mr. Duncan having been of the sixth generation. This branch of his ancestry was of English origin; William White having emigrated to New England in 1635, at the age of twenty-five years. He first settled in Ipswich, then went to Newbury, and came to Haverhill between 1640 and 1642.

On the paternal side, Mr. Duncan was of Scotch-Irish descent. His great-grandfather, George Duncan, was one of the colony that came from Londonderry, Ireland, and settled Londonderry, N.H., in 1719. He joined the colony probably within two or three years after its commencement, with seven children. He was a man of education, a justice of the peace, and an elder in the church. His youngest child, James, came to Haverhill about 1740, where he established himself as a merchant. He married Elizabeth, daughter of John and Elizabeth Bell, of Londonderry. He died in 1818.

aged ninety-two years. He had ten children, the sixth of whom was James, who married Rebecca White, and died Jan. 5, 1822, aged sixty-two years. He left two children: Samuel White, who died Oct. 21, 1824, aged thirty-four years; and James Henry, of this Memorial, who was born Dec. 5, 1793.

Thus on the maternal side the family of Mr. Duncan covers the entire history of Haverhill, a period of more than two centuries, and on the paternal side the three generations cover more than half of this period.

The purpose of this Memorial makes it proper to give a brief account of the Scotch-Irish colony from which Mr. Duncan had his descent. Its history and character render it worthy of comparison with the Plymouth colony, which it resembled in many features, differing from it only as the Scotch differ from the English, and as Presbyterians differ from Congregationalists. In their history previous to emigration, there is a striking parallel. Both were driven from their homes by religious persecutions; both took up a temporary residence in foreign countries; both suffered in these new homes, — the Puritans from lack of congeniality and the low standard of religion that prevailed about them, the Scotch-Irish from direct persecution; both were impelled to emigration by a desire for peace and religious liberty; both regarded their faith and form of church government as of supreme importance. The contrast between them consisted in the fact, that in the Old World the Scotch-Irish endured greater sufferings than did the Pilgrims, while in the New

World the trials of the Plymouth colony far exceeded those of the Scotch-Irish. Another contrast is found in the character of their influence. The Pilgrims, coming a century earlier, took possession of New England, established the Congregational order, and gave a direction to the history of the continent. The Scotch-Irish colony was soon swallowed up, lost for the most part the Presbyterian order and all peculiar customs and characteristics. The times of emigration are the only cause of this contrast. In force of character, in zeal for religion, in previous preparation, in singleness of purpose, the Scotch-Irish were not inferior to the Pilgrims.

The first settlement of the Scotch in the north of Ireland, was made about 1612, induced by liberal grants of lands that had reverted to James I. by reason of a rebellion of his Irish subjects. But the ancestors of the greater part of the colony that settled in New Hampshire were driven from Scotland by the persecutions of James II., carried out by Claverhouse, towards the close of the seventeenth century.

The unceasing antagonism of the Irish Catholics was only a degree less harassing than that from which they had fled. The memorable siege of Derry in 1688-9, occasioned by the attempt of James II. to regain his throne, was shared by a large number of those who came to this country. Nerved by this experience for any emergency, and constantly fretted by the enmity of their Irish neighbors, and by still continued oppressive measures of government, they began to emigrate, early in the eighteenth century, to the Middle States. In 1718, a colony of one hundred and twenty

families left, in five vessels, for Boston. There they separated. Some went to Andover, others to Pelham and Worcester; but the pastor, Rev. M. McGregor, and his flock, established themselves, early in 1719, on an unsettled tract in New Hampshire, to which they gave the name of Londonderry. Here they were soon joined by many of the families that had separated from them in Boston; and thus was formed, what for a long time it continued to be, a purely Scotch-Irish community. So far as is known, it was the only one in this country that could properly be thus named; all others were either quickly scattered, or merged in the prevailing population. It retained this characteristic till the close of the century. In speech, in social customs, in tone of mind, and in church government, it was scarcely affected by surrounding influences. The first two churches of Londonderry and Derry are still Presbyterian. Receiving continual accessions from Ireland, it also early began to send out colonists; a process that continued till its representatives were found in all parts of the country.

The characteristics of these colonists were thoroughly Scotch, slightly tinged by their temporary contact with the Irish character. With no intermingling of Irish blood, they yet had something of Irish humor and lightness of spirit. Some few customs also were learned in Ireland, as seen at their weddings and funerals. They were, however, distinctively Scotch in their superior vivacity and quickness of mind, in sociality, in rugged simplicity, and depth of emotional nature, — qualities that put them somewhat in contrast with

their English neighbors. They were less serious, but no less religious; rougher, but not less kind; plainer-spoken, but not less true; more hasty and impetuous, but, in the end, not less wise and considerate. These national traits seem to have been intensified by their isolated condition in Ireland, and for a half-century in this country, and still mark their descendants wherever they are found. Something of them was seen in Mr. Duncan: his Scotch blood betrayed itself in physical and mental traits, though much subdued by its intermixture with the English. Hon. William Willis writes: "I have a clear recollection of the three generations of Duncans in Haverhill. The first James, who died in 1818, was tall and brawny, with a distinctly marked Scotch face; his dress was in the old style, — broad coat, small clothes, buckled shoes, &c.; and his speech retained the racy brogue of his fatherland. His son James was a man of great energy, impetuous and overbearing in his temperament, and could not bear opposition or contradiction. *His* son James was altogether of a different mould, — mild, gentlemanly, calm, never overstepping the bounds of propriety, and of sufficient firmness and fortitude to indicate the Scotch energy of the Duncans, blended with the gentle temperament of the Whites."

Much of the force of mind and character and capacity for public affairs displayed by Mr. Duncan were undoubtedly derived from the Bell ancestry, — a family distinguished from the first by administrative ability, and still conspicuous in the public affairs of New Hampshire.

There are few left to speak of Mr. Duncan's childhood, but he is remembered by two or three persons as a boy of great purity of character and correctness of deportment. His love of books, especially the English classics, many of which he read while a mere child, led to the plan of giving him a liberal education. At the age of eleven years he was sent to Phillips Academy, at Exeter, N.H., then the leading classical school in the country. Mr. Duncan often referred to this early experience, and especially to his extreme suffering from shyness and timidity at taking his place in the class with pupils nearly all of whom were older, and some who had attained to the full stature of manhood. Though ranking among the first in scholarship, the recitation was often preceded by weeping at the ordeal before him. Here he was brought into the companionship of Edward Everett, Jared A. Sparks, Buckminster, John G. Palfrey, John A. Dix, and John S. Sleeper. The stimulating influence of such companions, aided by his own quick faculties, rapidly developed him; and at the age of fourteen he entered Harvard College. He was graduated in due course, in the class of 1812, with Dr. John Homans, Judge Sprague, Bishop Wainwright, Henry Ware, Franklin Dexter, Charles G. Loring, and others.

Then, as now, graduation at Harvard was made a festive occasion. Family tradition relates how nearly all the relatives and many friends made the long journey to Cambridge the day previous; how the services of the single hairdresser filled the night; how, after the public services, in which the young Duncan bore an orator's part, the entire company were

entertained at a sumptuous dinner served in a hotel; how they returned to Haverhill on the third day; all of which was enjoyed at an expense that would seem large even in these days of depreciated currency. In college Mr. Duncan held a high rank, especially in the classics, the careful study of which was strongly apparent in the smooth, rounded, latinized style that marked his conversation and public speech.

II.

PUBLIC LIFE.

THE career thus happily begun was followed by the study of the law, — first in the office of Hon. John Varnum, at Haverhill; and afterward with his cousin, Leverett Saltonstall, at Salem. In 1815 he was admitted to the Essex Bar, and entered upon practice at Haverhill.

The question was often asked him by his children why he settled in Haverhill, then a small village. He used to explain that before the railway system came into operation, bringing with it the tendency to centralization, the greater part of legal business was transacted in the country, and not, as now, in the larger cities. Many of the foremost lawyers were to be found in the smaller towns, and all cases were tried in their own locality. At that time, Jeremiah Mason, Daniel Webster, and Timothy Pickering were in Portsmouth; Judge Story and Leverett Saltonstall were in Salem; while almost every town could boast of a lawyer of standing and reputation. Mr. Duncan's practice brought him into the courts with these great men, and his contact with them fostered a certain air of largeness and dignity always apparent in his public life.

For several years Mr. Duncan gave his entire time to his profession; but the death of his father, Jan. 5, 1822, left him in

the charge of a considerable estate, which gradually withdrew him from its duties, though he did not wholly relinquish practice until 1840, when he took his seat in Congress. It has been thought by many a mistake that Mr. Duncan did not continue in his profession. His ready and sympathetic eloquence, his thorough honesty and comprehensive judgment, gave promise of a brilliant future. But probably his life was more widely useful than if he had remained an advocate. As a lawyer he was devoid of trickery, and he instinctively repudiated those indirect methods often employed in the profession. Though richly gifted as a pleader of cases, he had a constitutional aversion to litigation, and thus was oftener engaged in settling cases than in disputing them. He was fond of his profession, and reluctantly gave it up for what seemed to him more imperative duties. We introduce here the resolutions of the Essex Bar, passed after his death.

Resolved. That we desire to express and put on record our respect for the memory and character of the Honorable James H. Duncan, whose recent death was so sincerely and deeply lamented in the particular community where he was born and lived, as well as by the public at large. Mr. Duncan entered on the practice of the law in the courts of this county, more than fifty years ago, after a thorough preparation, according to the usages of that day, partly in the office of the late Leverett Saltonstall, so distinguished here in his generation, and his kinsman and friend. He pursued his profession here for many years, with marked fidelity and success, always trusted and respected by his brethren, until, having served his

State honorably and usefully in both branches of the Legislature, he was called by the general voice of his fellow-citizens into the public councils of the country, now more than twenty years ago, since which time he has withdrawn himself wholly from the practice of the profession, and attendance on the courts. Of late years he has been known as a lawyer, to much the largest portion now in practice at this bar, only by the "traditions of the elders," among whom, as well as in the courts, he had obtained and always held a "good report."

Resolved, That these proceedings be entered at length on our records; that the president be requested to present an attested copy thereof to the court, and to ask that the same be entered on record therein, and a copy transmitted to the family of our deceased friend by the clerk.

Mr. Duncan lived what may be called a *public* life; yet it was through a certain evident fitness that led him to be called to its duties, rather than from his own seeking. He filled no very high offices; but, in one position or another, he was constantly serving his generation. A short time previous to his admission to the Bar, he was elected Major of the Haverhill Light-Infantry Company; and, passing through the various grades of militia service, he rose to the rank of Colonel, by which title he was afterwards commonly addressed. He was early a trustee of the Essex County Agricultural Society, and from 1836 to 1839 its President.

On the formation of the National Republican party, popularly known as the Whig party, in 1827, he was elected to the State Legislature; and, in the three succeeding years,

to the Senate, when he declined re-election. In 1837-8, he was again found in the House; and, in the two following years, he was a member of the Council. In 1857, he was again elected to the Legislature. On the passage of the State Insolvent Law, in 1838, he was appointed one of the Commissioners in Insolvency; and, on the passage of the United-States Bankrupt Law, in 1841, he was made Commissioner in Bankruptcy, holding the office until the law was repealed. In 1839, he was elected a delegate to the Convention at Harrisburg that nominated General Harrison for the Presidency. In 1848, he was chosen to represent his district, then the largest manufacturing district in the United States, in the national Congress; and was re-elected in 1850. This simple statement indicates how constantly, up to the age of sixty, Mr. Duncan was in public life. Meanwhile, and during the remainder of his life, he was serving in other large public interests not of a political nature; while in town matters his services were constantly demanded. For fifty years, scarcely an important item of municipal business was transacted except under his advice or leadership. If a matter needed to be brought before the General Court, he was delegated to attend to it. He took the leading part in the erection of two Town Halls; making, at the dedication of both, historical addresses.

Hon. ALFRED KITTREDGE communicates the following impression of Mr. Duncan in connection with the town meetings: —

"He took great interest in the affairs of the town, and frequently addressed his fellow-citizens upon subjects of importance, — favoring or opposing measures, as he judged the welfare of the town required. He was listened to with great interest, and usually carried a majority with him. He did not take the floor upon every question, but reserved himself for important subjects, upon which he wished the town to form a correct judgment. In all discussions, he was in a marked degree gentlemanly, both in his manner of presenting subjects and in his treatment of those who differed from him, — stating his own views forcibly, and giving others due credit for their own. He had a remarkably clear utterance, and a rich, ringing voice that gave him great power over an audience. When in the Legislature, Samuel Allen (I think) gave him the cognomen of 'the silver-tongued member from Haverhill.'"

Once, however, his townsmen refused to listen to him. The town was about to vote, for the third time, bounties to recruits, ruinously large, and also in opposition to the general statutes. The excitement was intense, and was pervaded neither by reason nor a regard for the laws. The Town Hall was crowded with nearly two thousand men, — the vast majority clamoring for the measure. Mr. Duncan alone resisted it, and, in spite of the inevitable misconstruction that he was endeavoring to save his property from taxation, and the worse imputation of a lack of patriotism and of siding with the disloyal party, contended for the observance of the laws, and insisted that the defence of the nation could only be successfully made by men moved by a patriotic sense of duty, and by a willingness to accept the measures

of the general government for raising troops. They refused to listen; and Mr. Duncan left the platform the most unpopular man in Haverhill. His sense of duty did not suffer him to rest here. In no spirit of retaliation, but because he felt that the lasting interests of the town and the principles of municipal government demanded it, he secured an injunction from the Supreme Court upon the action of the town meeting. On the evening of the day when this became known, his house was surrounded by a mob, and, for several hours, the personal safety of its inmates was seriously threatened. His course on this occasion illustrates the fearlessness and moral courage which formed so conspicuous a feature of his character. He was well aware of the hostility he must encounter, and of the personal danger even to which he might be exposed by thus opposing a movement upon which, in terror of an approaching draft, the public mind was frantically bent. But his view of the public welfare — his convictions of duty — forced him to it; and, when impelled to action by such considerations, he could never take counsel of his fears. In a few days, reason returned to the people; and he was soon re-established in their minds as their leader in the home-work of the war.

One of the most interesting traits of Mr. Duncan was his patience with the people in their hasty and unwise action. He never showed disgust or withheld effort or spoke discouragingly, even when affairs were at the worst. There was a tenderness for the town, an enduring love, in which its peculiar faults were swallowed up, and lost even to himself.

The following letter from General FRANKLE, a German citizen and a soldier of high rank in the late war, speaks of Mr. Duncan as a friend and as a patriot:—

“To me, he was one of the dearest, most valuable friends. A stranger I came to him: he soon was my friend, generously giving encouragement and treating me with such affability and kindness as to reveal at once the unprejudiced citizen of the world and the Christian gentleman. Only those who have tried to make their homes in a foreign country can understand the trials and struggle the undertaking costs, and can truly appreciate kindness of heart unbiassed by prejudice, such as I found in Mr. Duncan. With pleasure mixed with sadness I look back on my intercourse with him, and like to recall his words: ‘Here we acknowledge integrity combined with intelligence as the chief value of man, without considering where he was born.’ From his lips, this was no meaningless phrase. He lived up to his words in this as in all else. In connection with this sentiment I had ample opportunity to see how he felt towards those of foreign birth, who fought in our late war. He was as just as he was kind. I remember the words he wrote to me in one of his letters during that period: ‘We have a right to expect the aid of every one who lives among us; for we accord to every one all privileges we ourselves possess. Every citizen, whether foreign or native born, lives under the benign protection of our government; and in return it has a right to the services of all, in this hour of need. I have no doubt as to the issue of the war: whatever sacrifices it will cost, it will bring us lasting peace, firmer union, and will erase from us the crime of slavery, and establish perfect equality among us, irrespective of race or color.’

"Many men from Haverhill and vicinity, serving with me during the war, sent their well-earned money through me to Mr. Duncan, for distribution to their families at home. Many a humble household was gladdened by his presence, appearing to them as a harbinger of good tidings and comfort. His words of consolation and sympathy, and his active, untiring assistance, generally not known to the public, will ever be remembered by them. I like to dwell on the scene, when I read a letter from Mr. Duncan to the men who so liberally provided for their families; telling them how opportunely their money came, how it brought joy and comfort to their dear ones at home; giving them news from their wives and children; praising them for their love and forethought for their families as well as for their patriotism and valor in the field, and assuring them of his heartfelt sympathy in their present trials. Many an eye was moist, and from many lips came the words, 'God bless him!' Can we wonder that he is mourned over by the humble as well as by those who stood nearer to him in a more intimate relation, and that he ranks among us as the representative American citizen?"

We leave it to the voluntary correspondence of others to speak at length of Mr. Duncan's public life; but we cannot forbear mention, as showing his faithfulness as a citizen, of his services on the School Committee, after the age of seventy. These duties commonly performed by younger men, and often too slightly, he met as promptly and earnestly as though they had been matters of State, — always at the meetings of the committee, visiting the schools in strict conformity with the rules, and sharing in the examinations. Faithful in much, he was also faithful in that which is least.

The following resolutions were adopted by the town a few days after Mr. Duncan's death: —

Whereas, The event of death, as the ministering angel of Providence, has recently appeared to us in the removal of our esteemed fellow-citizen, the late Hon. James H. Duncan; and whereas we deem it proper that some formal expression should follow this event which has taken from us one whose entire life was spent here, and as a citizen was so constantly and intimately associated with the varied interests of this community, — therefore,

Resolved, That in the death of Mr. Duncan, while recognizing the hand of Providence, and bowing in Christian submission to the wisdom above us, we feelingly deplore the great loss which this community has sustained in the departure of one whose counsel has so often been our guide, whose services in public affairs have been so frequently and so variously invoked, and whose sympathies and interests were so inseparably linked, by the associations and incidents of a long life, with all the leading affairs of our community.

Resolved, That for his public services and private virtues, for his friendly spirit and broad toleration so constantly manifested towards his fellow-citizens in all their varied interests, for his integrity in all the business affairs of life, and Christian kindness towards his fellow-men, for the unblemished life he lived, which was prolonged to that age when of him it may be said he was gathered to the fathers "like a shock of corn fully ripe," we have reason to cherish his memory with grateful remembrance as a prudent counsellor and common friend, whose influence and usefulness were spared to us during the full measure of active years allotted to man.

Resolved, That in connection with this public expression of tribute to his memory, we also bear to the family of the deceased

our cordial and hearty sympathy with them in their affliction, uniting our common sorrow with their private grief over this event which to us is a public loss, as to them it is a heartfelt sorrow.

Resolved. That these resolutions be placed upon the records of the town, and that the clerk be directed to furnish a copy of the same to the family of the deceased, and also for publication.

The following letter is from Dr. SPOFFORD, of Groveland, a life-long contemporary with Mr. Duncan: —

. "Upon my return to this county, after some years' absence, one of my earliest associates and political friends was James H. Duncan; and my social and political intercourse with him and other literary and professional gentlemen of Haverhill and vicinity, of that day, are among my most cherished and valued recollections. Although politics were rather still in the 'era of good feeling' which succeeded the peace of 1815, Mr. Duncan and myself were naturally in sympathy from our mutual inheritance of the principles of the 'Essex Junta.' — a constellation of worthies prominent in the Revolution of 1776, who were, in the words of a distinguished orator of that day, 'the companions, the aids, the friends of Washington,' who had the honor to be slandered and abused by the party whose principles and long political ascendancy culminated in the slaveholders' rebellion. In 1836 I became connected with the 'Haverhill Gazette,' as a proprietor and associate editor with John G. Whittier. This connection brought me into more intimate relations with Mr. Duncan, as our paper was long the only Whig and Republican paper here. It was the fortune, or misfortune, of Mr. Duncan and myself, and our political associates, to be in a hopeless minority on national politics, with little exception, for a period covering a very large portion of our active lives. Nothing but

firm principle, early imbibed and honestly held, sufficed in those days to retain talented and ambitious young men in an almost hopeless minority, or from joining the popular party, and placing themselves in the line of promotion to office and honor. Of such promotion, from his ability, education, and manners, no one would have been more sure than Mr. Duncan ; but at the darkest hour, when no sagacity could discern the glimmering of a day when an opposer of the Democratic party would enter the White House, or even an executive office under the general government, we always knew where to find our friend. For him, office had no charms unless held in accordance with his fixed principles and political associations. In 1840 it was our fortune to be of the prevailing party, and, after a most exciting canvass, to elect William H. Harrison to the Presidential chair. In that canvass I had the honor of standing on the same platform with our lamented friend to plead the cause of the people. Our paper, for the standing and efficiency of which we were indebted to Mr. Duncan, and others whom I should be proud to name, was allowed to have done good service in the cause. Our towns have, with slight exceptions, accorded with our political course ever since ; and we have been intimately associated with a noble band of patriots in five successful Presidential elections. It is a satisfaction to know that our friend, and some others of our political associates lately departed, who felt a deep interest in the cause, lived to see our life-long principles triumphant, the dark cloud of slavery removed, and New-England principles, so long overborne and held in abeyance by a false and spurious democracy, again pervading the land. Of late my own personal feelings have been most interested, when, from the already scanty and never recruited ranks of those who entered life before me, my few remaining seniors drop off one by one. But in this case I feel that not only his family sustains an im-

mense loss, not merely of one who has done much, but from whom, in this interesting crisis of our public affairs and the new municipal organization, much more might have been expected."

Mr. JOHN G. WHITTIER, who, Mr. Duncan often used to say, was as good a writer of prose as of poetry, sends these few words: —

"The death of my old friend and fellow-townsmen, James H. Duncan, removes one of the few remaining landmarks of the Haverhill of my boyhood. The last time I saw him he was in good health, and in the full and vigorous exercise of his fine powers of intellect, and with the same winning manner and conversational tact which had early attracted me. At one period his views of political duty differed widely from my own; but for many years we have stood together on the platform of the Republican party, of which he was an earnest and efficient advocate. His congressional career was a highly honorable one, marked by his characteristic soundness of judgment and conscientious faithfulness to a high ideal of duty. In private life as in public, he was habitually courteous and gentlemanly. For many years the leading man in his section, he held his place without ostentation, and, to use the words of Lautsze, the Chinese sage, 'achieved greatness by not making himself great.'"

The following letter from Hon. AMOS TUCK, of Exeter, N.H., gives so full an account of Mr. Duncan's congressional career that other mention of it is scarcely needed: —

. "I have pleasure in complying with the kind request of your family to state some of my recollections and impressions of your honored father at the time I knew him in Congress.

"Although I had resided at Exeter more than ten years, and of course knew the general estimation in which your father was held, I never came into personal relations with him till I met him at Washington, as a member of the 31st Congress, in December, 1849. In order to do justice to the sentiments he then maintained, and to the position which he took upon the important questions of the time, it is necessary briefly to recall the circumstances of that period.

"He entered Congress at the first session of General Taylor's administration, when the problems in politics and government, which grew out of the Mexican war and the acquisition of California and New Mexico, infused such intensity of feeling into the public mind, that the two great political parties of the country began to break down; and in sundry instances men, before prominent as leaders, denounced their former political associates, and allied themselves to life-long adversaries. The old Whig party, with which your father had long been honorably connected, was becoming more anti-slavery; while the Democratic party was gradually giving way to the entire leadership of Southern men, and becoming hopelessly involved in the sin, shame, and want of statesmanship, involved in the advocacy and support of slavery extension. The change at that time had fully commenced in the Whig party, which in 1855 culminated in taking a new name, and in the Democratic party, which, even at an earlier period, resulted in a repeal of the Missouri Compromise. A new era was approaching, and men were readjusting their party relations according to the degree of faith they had in a higher law than party convenience, and in the sacredness of the duty of equal and exact justice to all men. It was at this period first becoming manifest, in the example of some of the most honored and intellectually the greatest men of the country, that intellect alone did not constitute the statesmanship which the times demanded. Moral

questions were involved, were discussed throughout the country; and the ability to perceive moral truth, and to estimate the force of moral causes, was as indispensable to leadership as superior mental capacity. Some brilliant stars fell from their places in the political firmament: and new men, having more faith, representing the aroused conscience of a religious and educated people, began to emerge from the masses, and to assume the leadership which at length guided the country through years of war, and established our institutions on their first firm foundation.

"Your father had relations of friendship with the old leaders of the Whig party, and was welcomed into their fellowship at Washington on his arrival at that city. But his moral perceptions had been cultivated beyond what was common among the devotees of either of the old parties, and he knew and felt the force of the moral questions which were discussed throughout the country upon the relations of the government to slavery. Attached to his party, and attached to his honored friends, he yet could not be blind or deaf or insensible to the claims for justice of the humble who could not even speak for themselves. He remembered those in bonds, as bound with them, and, at the expense of personal comfort, voted, I believe, from first to last, during his congressional term of four years, under all the circumstances of an excited period of our history, on the slavery question in all its phases, only as his best friends could now wish he had voted, after all the light since shed upon the subject. That he so signally and uniformly acted on the side of wisdom and right, while so many of his associates were misled by excitement, or failed for other reasons to see and maintain what it is now apparent they ought to have supported, I attribute in a great degree to his elevated moral character, to his cultivated sense of right, to his determination never to violate the dictates of an enlightened conscience.

"He was not a frequent debater in the House of Representatives; but when he did speak, he commanded more than common attention. His language was chaste and of the pure English type, his voice musical and commanding, his manner cultivated and elegant. He was one whom to know was to love, who made many friends and no enemies, and who left Congress possessing universal esteem.

"I will not presume to speak of him, as I have known him since 1853, because I am aware how much better he is known to others, who lived nearer to him, met him oftener, and enjoyed the blessing of a more intimate friendship with him. Yet I may be allowed to rejoice with his friends in the bright example he has furnished of the true Christian gentleman, -- so refined in manner, so generous, so cultivated, dignified, and good, that the memory of him will be for ever blessed."

FROM HON. ROBERT C. WINTHROP: —

. "I had not failed to notice in the newspapers the sudden death of your lamented father, and I regretted extremely that it was out of my power to be present at his funeral. I had not indeed met him often of late years, but I have always entertained for him the most cordial esteem and respect. Our association at Washington was only during a single Congress, for a considerable part of which I was in the Senate while he was in the House of Representatives; but I had known him long before, in the Legislature of Massachusetts and in social life, and had ever regarded him as a man of singular amiability and excellence. His conscientious devotion to duty, his scrupulous integrity, his modest yet manly independence, and his earnest patriotism were worthy of all praise; while the true-hearted Christian spirit which pervaded his life could not fail to win for him the confidence of all around him.

I gladly add my humble testimony to his virtues, and am only sorry that my personal intercourse with him was so infrequent of late years that I can enter into no details in illustration of his character or career. I thank you for including me among his friends, and for assuring me that he remembered with pleasure our old association. I have few more cherished satisfactions than being remembered kindly by the good men of our own and other States, with whom I have been associated in public life in other years."

Next to Mr. Duncan's life-long care for the interests of the town, perhaps the best service he rendered to the public was in his connection with Brown University. From 1835 until his death, he was a member of its Board of Fellows,—a period covering the crisis of its history,—in which his sound and enlightened judgment and legal skill were of the utmost service. In 1861, after twenty-six years of service, the Board conferred on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws. Mr. Duncan privately criticised this act as coming from a body of which he was an active member, and never wore the honor easily; but others can well understand that the Board were justified in waiving the delicacy of the act in order to bestow an honor in itself right and proper. Probably no one else viewed the matter as did Mr. Duncan.

The following discriminating letter from the Rev. Dr. BARNAS SEARS touches upon Mr. Duncan's relation to the University: —

. "Being a member of the Board of Fellows, he was accustomed to come to the city on the Monday evening preceding Commencement, that he might be at the meeting of the Board

on Tuesday. He always made it a point to take lodgings at the City Hotel, in order that the hospitality of friends might be extended to others, especially clergymen. He called at my house uniformly the first evening, where he generally met other friends from abroad; and these were among the most delightful hours of Commencement week. It would be difficult to say whether his relish for the pleasures of social intercourse or his interest in the affairs of the college predominated. He was peculiarly formed both for social and for public life. He was one of the few who are in their right place as guardians of a literary institution. As might be expected, he soon became one of the most influential members of the corporation. He was liberal and enlightened in his views, wise and prudent in his measures, and manly and noble in his feelings, being neither ungenerous or uncharitable on the one hand, nor weak and yielding on the other. He could maintain the general interest and chartered rights of the University, if invaded even by indirection or implication, and yet, in debate, hold the strongest opponent in check by a silken cord. His mind was quick to perceive the nature and bearing of any question that might arise. Rarely were difficulties started in the course of a discussion which he had not anticipated in thought; and still more rarely was he overreached by a resort to ambiguous means to carry a point. If ever a temptation was offered to bend a great principle to suit the views of individuals, or to surrender a great interest for the sake of temporary expediency, it was then that his mind rose to the height of the subject,—that his thoughts were compacted and rounded into shape, that his language became select and pointed, and that his voice rung out in silver tones. How often did these same qualities appear in some of the more animated discussions in which he took part at the meetings of the Missionary Union! Long will men remember the

impression made on these and similar occasions by this Christian gentleman and scholar, with his finely cut features and symmetrical form, his graceful and animated delivery, his chaste, beautiful, and musical language, his pertinent, clear, and convincing arguments, his unflinching fidelity, and his spotless integrity. So blended in him were these various attributes of body and mind, that we can think of them only in their union, and it would seem that a mind of delicate mould had formed for itself a bodily organ suited to its own purposes. In him we see how much Christianity can do for true culture, and how beautiful an ornament culture is to Christianity. It may be long before a successor can be found with such a union of personal, literary, social, and Christian graces; but all who were associated with him in office can cherish in their hearts the remembrance of his virtues, and feel the influence of his example to their latest days. Thus, as empty vials retain somewhat of the perfume with which they were once filled, so may the places once occupied by those now no longer with us retain the fragrance of their name and worth."

At the annual meeting of the Board of Fellows of Brown University in 1869, the following action was taken:—

President CASWELL remarked, at the commencement of his annual report to the Corporation, —

"I begin by adverting to the very great loss which the University has sustained in the death of the Hon. James H. Duncan, LL.D., its senior Fellow. He died at his residence in Haverhill, Mass., on the 8th of February last, at the age of seventy-five years. Mr. Duncan was elected a member of the Board of Fellows in 1835. He took a lively interest in the prosperity of the institution; and during the long period of more than a third of a century, though

living in another State and at a considerable distance, he was seldom absent from these annual meetings. He brought to the discharge of his high duties sincerity and earnestness of purpose, courtesy of manner, and great soundness of judgment.

"Fully appreciating, as we do, our great loss, we may well bear in grateful remembrance his long and valuable services as a member of this Corporation, his exemplary Christian character, and his many private and public virtues."

After the reading of the report by Dr. Caswell, and its adoption by the Corporation, ALVA WOODS, D.D., a member of the Board of Fellows, presented the following preamble and resolutions, which were unanimously passed by the Corporation:—

Whereas, It pleased our heavenly Father, in his infinite wisdom, to remove by death, on the eighth day of February, 1869, our much-esteemed associate, the Hon. James H. Duncan, LL.D., the senior Fellow of Brown University, it is deemed fit and proper for this Corporation to place on record an expression of their estimate of his worth and of the loss sustained by his death; therefore,

Resolved, That this Corporation retain a grateful recollection of the many virtues of our departed associate; of the integrity and uprightness of his character, the soundness of his judgment, his fairness and urbanity in debate, his abnegation of self in his efforts for the public good, and his remarkable exemplification, both in his official relations and private intercourse, of the characteristics of a Christian gentleman.

Resolved, That this Corporation hold in deservedly high estimation his unwavering loyalty to the University, during thirty-three years in which he was a member of the Board of Fellows, as mani-

fested by his regular and punctual attendance at our annual meetings, rarely if ever being absent, by placing his sons here to be educated, contributing from his own funds, according to his ability, towards the necessary endowments of the College, and maintaining, while life lasted, perpetual vigilance to preserve intact and unmoved the foundations of this ancient institution of learning, so that it should accomplish, both in the letter and spirit, the noble purposes of its benevolent founders, as set forth in the charter which they framed for its government in all coming time.

Resolved, That while we mourn the great loss which the institution has sustained by his death, we tender to the bereaved widow and family our warmest sympathies; and direct that a certified copy of these resolutions be sent to them by the Secretary of this Corporation.

These resolutions were accompanied by the following letter from Mr. S. S. BRADFORD, the Secretary, *pro tem.*, of the Board:—

. "Please be assured that these are not merely formal words, but expressive of what is most sincerely believed and most deeply felt. Permit me to embrace this opportunity to say, on my own behalf, that I greatly deplore this loss of one of the wisest, truest, ablest, and best friends of our College. It is but six brief years since I was first honored with his acquaintance and confidence. The kindly regards which he at the very first awakened in my heart towards him, the respect and honor, and, I may say, the veneration with which I at once looked up to him, were an inspiration which has increased in power from year to year, and must live on while memory lasts."

III.

CHRISTIAN CHARACTER.

IT is especially to preserve the memory of Mr. Duncan's religious life that this Memorial is made. Water spilt upon the ground cannot indeed be gathered up again; still the loving hands of those who knew him well have drawn such a picture of him in this respect, that something like a true impression may be given and so preserved. Mr. Duncan, during his whole life, worshipped with the First Baptist Church in Haverhill. His ancestors, on both sides, were among its founders. He was thus a Baptist by birth and education. To the principles thus inculcated, he afterwards added the full conviction of his mature years, and, through life, was a firm and hearty friend of that church. Yet he was not, in the narrow sense of the term, a denominationalist. He was by nature catholic, and took the broad and liberal side on all church questions. More and more, towards the close of his life, he dwelt on those features of Christ's kingdom which are universal, and rejoiced in its progress under all names. In periods of special religious interest, his catholicity of feeling was strongly apparent. At such times, nothing could be inferred as to his ecclesiastical preferences. In his earnest exhortations and personal labors,

his one desire was that men might believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Still he was most loyal to his own denomination; and to the local church in Haverhill he gave the devoted service of a lifetime. Though this church has always been blessed by an able ministry and has had a laity of high character, still the dignity, and usefulness, and high Christian tone, that have marked it are due, in very great measure, to his early and long influence upon it. He did not become a member of the church until the age of forty; yet his interest in and care for it were scarcely less before than after. Though he did not regard himself as a Christian until this time, probably his whole life was a period of religious growth and ripening. He seems to have been deterred from taking his place in the church by a misapprehension as to the signs of conversion, — expecting some powerful change of feeling and almost sensible assurance of acceptance. But persons of Mr. Duncan's habits of life seldom undergo such experiences. The background was too bright for such a contrast. In the winter of 1833-4, Drs. Beecher and Wisner, of Boston, held a "four days' meeting" in Haverhill. The town was powerfully moved by their earnest preaching, and a deep religious movement began. Mr. Duncan was confined to his house by illness; but the spirit of the movement seemed to reach him in his retirement, and he became deeply impressed in regard to his own spiritual condition. One evening, a member of his family returned from the service, and gave some account of the sermon, by Dr. Beecher, from Hosea vi. 3: "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know

the Lord; his going forth is prepared as the morning." The text seemed to dispel his former misapprehension, and opened up to him the idea of a divine progress in the life of the soul. Soon after, he was able to attend the meetings, which were continued for some time. During the few weeks previous to Mr. Duncan's death, similar meetings were held in the churches of the town, which he attended with the deepest interest, — taking part in them with a freshness of fervor and an energy wonderful in one of his years. At one of them he related, by way of encouragement to others, his own experience at that crisis of his religious life. He described the depth of his feeling, the fullness with which he was convinced of his duty, the clearer light that had come to him as to the nature of regeneration, — all attended, however, by a hesitation to take the needful position. One evening, however, he said, when these convictions were unusually strong, he was about to leave the church after the sermon, not having summoned resolution to remain at the inquiry meeting that was to follow. While moving down the aisle, a humble Christian woman said to him, "Mr. Duncan, would it not be better for you to remain?" This simple remark was all that was needed to turn his hesitation into a purpose. He went back to his seat, and, in the meeting that followed, made a public consecration of himself to Christ. The full import of this act cannot be understood, except as Mr. Duncan's position in society, and as a leading lawyer and citizen and a man largely engaged in public affairs, and intimately associated in legal and political circles

with distinguished men who were out of sympathy with the evangelical faith, is remembered. It was indeed a taking up of the cross. Then his religious life began in full earnest; and, from that time, flowed on, an ever-widening and deepening stream, till the end. He was soon after baptized by the Rev. Dr. Hague, of Boston, the church not having a pastor.

The Rev. S. P. HILL, of Washington, formerly pastor of the church in Haverhill, writes, —

"My acquaintance with your honored and beloved father commenced in connection with my pastorate of the church in Haverhill, in 1832. He was not then a member of the church, but took an interested and active part in all that pertained to the welfare of the congregation, and was greatly esteemed as its wise counsellor and firm friend. He welcomed me to my new, and in many respects trying, field of labor, always gave me a kind and judicious support while I remained in Haverhill, and he never at any time afterwards withdrew from me the sympathy of a sincere friendship. I remember particularly his having invited me one day to a ride in his good old New-England chaise; his mind attracted much by the reviving beauties of nature was still more affected by the evident movements of new spiritual life awakening in him, and he freely and fully unburdened to me all his inward thoughts. He told me his former difficulties and embarrassments in arriving at a comfortable assurance of acceptance with his Saviour, and the manner in which they had at length been overcome. His principal obstacle, he told me, was the impression that he received from childhood, that conversion was some powerful transition, accompanied by almost visible and audible evidence. He had lately had his attention

called to a passage in Hosea: 'Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord; his going forth is prepared as the morning,' &c. And such certainly was the progress of religion in him. His interest in it, either for himself personally or for others, never seemed to suffer a decline, but was onward and upward.

"Perhaps no one's fidelity to religion is so tried as by accepting the situation of a Representative in Congress. Serving his constituents and country with great acceptance for two sessions, it was my privilege to meet him again in this place, and to share, as in the olden time, his pleasant intercourse. I can truly say that these trying circumstances did not in any wise change him. His attendance on divine worship was constant, and his whole life was a beautiful exemplification of the simple, sincere, courageous Christian. Thus in every scene and at every period did he illustrate in his career the beautiful idea that first determined the principle of his religious experience. And now having attained, as we believe, the highest point of progress, what remains to us but to rejoice in his favored lot? While we give to nature her tears, let us give to grace its triumphs, and view him henceforth as

'Walking with God,
High in salvation and the climes of bliss.'"

In no respect is Mr. Duncan's character so complete as in that of a member of the visible church. He gave to it not only the best of his ability and culture and the full devotion of his heart, but whatever it might seem to need of time and material help. Yet his plan was to develop the strength of the church rather than suffer it to lean upon him. His wisdom is now evident. When he united with the church, it was in a languishing condition, and, as Dr. Train remarked

in his address at the funeral, would probably have died had it not been for Mr. Duncan's wise and faithful assistance. It is now strong in a large and earnest membership. The deep piety and fidelity that he brought into the church were of far greater service to it than his material support. The church was first in his thoughts. Nothing but the most imperative reasons kept him from its meetings. Dr. Bosworth, in his eloquent commemorative discourse, relates that "once, when asked by a member of his family to attend a political gathering, at which his own claims as a candidate for Congress were to be advocated, his prompt and decisive reply was, 'No, my dear: it is the hour for the meeting of the church.' When the request was renewed after the church meeting had closed, his quick response was, 'No: I do not wish to have my mind drawn from serious things.' To these week-day meetings of the church he brought his best gifts of speech and thought. His deep emotional nature specially fitted him to take part in them, and they were often the scenes of an eloquence and fervency of appeal that would have graced any pulpit. His mind dwelt in the circle of the simple gospel truths,—regarding them as facts rather than as dogmas. Christ as a personal Saviour, and a life of actual faith in Him, were his central and governing thoughts."

The following letter from the Rev. AUGUSTUS H. STRONG, of Cleveland, for several years Mr. Duncan's pastor, though treating upon other features of his character, is so appropriate to this point that it is introduced entire:—

CLEVELAND, Feb. 9, 1869.

MY DEAR MRS. DUNCAN, — I have been hoping, almost against hope, that I might have the sad pleasure of being with you during these few days to come; but Providence seems to order otherwise, and I have left to me only the poor expression of my sympathy and grief which a letter can give.

The shock was almost as sudden and desolating, when I heard of Mr. Duncan's death, as it would have been if I had heard that my own father had died. Your household has been so much a home to me, and every thought of it is so interwoven with the memory of the head of the household, that I can scarcely realize what the old homestead will be without him. Very few men in our day preserve, with all the advantages of modern culture, so much of the grace and courtesy of the olden time. There are few homes that have been so blessed as yours, or that have exerted, as yours has, a wide and lasting influence through the many who, during these many years, have enjoyed your hospitalities. I think no one who ever saw Mr. Duncan in his own home can forget the dignity and princelike cordiality with which he was received. I have learned many a lesson from him in this regard.

He was a man of most eminent natural gifts. The pure English that flowed from his lips came from a mind that recognized, as by instinct, the fitnesses of language, and that never failed to clothe the thought in the most just and winning garb. The soul of eloquence was in him too: no man I ever saw kindled into so quick and beautiful enthusiasm in presence of a great thought of Christian philanthropy or of divine and sovereign grace. Some of his talks in our evening prayer-meetings, after the sabbath-days' sermons had been preached, seemed to me to be specimens of an almost

marvellous eloquence ; in a larger assembly they would have made him famous. We all knew his powers of conversation, and I am grateful that a very wide and appreciative circle recognized his remarkable gifts of public address,—gifts that put him side by side in many respects with Everett, his college-mate and friend.

But not his family and private influence as a man of courtesy and hospitality ; not his services to town and State and country, or his high powers as an orator, — affect me most : I think of Mr. Duncan as a Christian, and every thing else is lost sight of. The Church of Jesus Christ will miss him, and that beloved company of believers will never look the same again, now that he is gone. I can well remember how he used to drink in the truth, when I myself preached in the spirit of it, and how every such divine influence seemed to reproduce itself in his family and public prayers. With much of variation in his moods, with many doubts and conflicts in his inner life, it was always a strength and help to me to see how invariably principle, and not feeling, ruled with him ; how constant and devout was his attendance on the worship of the church, both social and public, and how bound up he seemed to be in all the interests of the Zion of God. It has pleased me greatly to hear that the last year has been one of peculiar religious refreshing and enjoyment to him. I am reminded of Dr. Chalmers's wish, that after six decades of life had passed, the seventh might be a sabbath of religious rest and of preparation for heaven. God has been very gracious to our departed and lamented friend, that the last days were days when heaven's peace and joy were with him, bright foregleams of the glory that was so soon to dawn upon his soul. Mr. Duncan was one of those men who seem to be so packed full of life, so invulnerable to ordinary attacks of mortality, that we expect them almost never to die. But the death of such is all the more a

blow to us, and a solemn lesson how short life is at the longest, and how certainly death must come to us. Still, dead, as he is, he is not dead in the highest and best sense. He was one of those souls, who, we feel, must have an immortality before them in which their powers can fully expand and develop, and in which their praise and knowledge of God can be made perfect; and here, amid all our sorrow, there is great joy.

“Do we call the star lost that is hidden
In the great light of morn,
Or fashion a shroud for the young child
In the day it is born?

Yet behold, this were wise to their folly
Who mourn, sore distressed,
When a soul that is summoned, believing,
Enters into its rest.”

A more signal proof of Mr. Duncan's fidelity to the church, as well as a truer indication of his piety, are seen in the fact that his prominence as a member never led him into a spirit of dictation or resistance. We quote from Dr. Bosworth's sermon: “The affairs of the church were not always conducted according to his views. He sometimes differed in his opinions from his pastor, but having uttered and advocated his own views, he quietly submitted to the decisions of the body. His magnanimity was equal to his subordination. He never abandoned the church, or for one hour ceased to co-operate with it.”

Mr. Duncan's religious life in Washington was like that at home, — not merely above reproach, but positively active in relation to the ordinances of religion.

Mr. JOHN KEELY, Deacon in the First Baptist Church, contributes an account of Mr. Duncan's connection with the Sunday school, of which he was for a long time superintendent, and, after his return from Washington until his death, a teacher: —

"From the commencement of the Baptist Religious Society in Haverhill, the families connected with Mr. Duncan's ancestry had shown a remarkable interest in its prosperity: but all had remained outside of the church. It might very naturally have been expected that Mr. Duncan's literary pursuits and cultivated tastes would have led him to look upon this society with more indifference than his family connections had hitherto done. But we find him, like them, giving his counsels and efforts to promote its welfare. As early as 1810, when it seemed necessary, but rather difficult, to establish a Sunday school, though not professing to be a Christian, he greatly encouraged his pastor, and aided the undertaking by volunteering to become one of the teachers: and the intelligent fidelity with which he then inculcated the fundamental doctrines and duties of religion is now held in grateful remembrance. And when it was deemed desirable to organize a Sunday-school society, he cheerfully accepted, not so much the honor of being its president, as the opportunity of thus giving his influence to aid in the religious education of the young. And he continued in this position until, in the full maturity of his manhood, he surrendered himself to Christ and his cause: and, much to the surprise of his numerous associates in literary, civil, and political life, but true to his convictions of duty, — the first of all his family connections to do so, — he asked admission into the church for whose welfare he and his ancestors had so long cared. Though at this time burdened with an amount of business cares

such as few would consent to bear, he cheerfully took upon himself his full share of labor on committees; and the social and more public meetings of the church were often thrilled by the earnest, noble conceptions of truth and duty which so eloquently fell from his lips.

"That elevated position in society which was cheerfully conceded to one possessing his rare powers and refinement never led him to treat as inferiors those with whom he was associated in the church, but only led him the more gracefully to mingle his efforts with those of his fellow-Christians in striving to make the church a light in the surrounding community, and to win others to Christ. Here, he seemed to be anxious to think of himself and to be esteemed by others only 'according to the measure of faith which God had dealt.'"

"Soon after he entered the church, he was appointed superintendent of the Sunday school. This position he filled fifteen years, until public duties at the Capital compelled him to be absent. On his return he declined to resume that position, but readily consented to labor as a teacher. Very soon he gathered around him a large class of young men, who listened with delight to his well-prepared instructions, and for whose welfare he cared with so deep and prayerful a solicitude as impelled him to express in private his anxiety to see them decided Christians. Though Mr. Duncan was many years older than any other teacher in the school, no one manifested a deeper interest in all that related to its prosperity. Constitutionally and by habit inclined to be conservative, here he was always ready to co-operate with the superintendent in all his progressive plans for the welfare of the school: sometimes himself suggesting new measures for trial. When at home and well, he was always present; and, at the close of an interesting session of the school or the con-

cert, he would often linger to express to the superintendent his satisfaction at the interest manifested in the exercises by the scholars. Only a few weeks before his death, at the close of a prayer-meeting, at which a large number of our scholars were present, — and some had expressed their deep concern for their own salvation, — his countenance beaming with almost a heavenly radiance, he met the superintendent with expressions of delight at the excellent condition of the school.

“Mr. Duncan was also remarkable for the singular courtesy with which he treated all his associates. It was wonderful to see with what graceful pleasantness and ease such a man could exhibit a perfect example of deferential propriety, and what a charm was thrown over it all by the reflection that it was really the natural result of his acknowledged superiority. The superintendent felt that he could always rely upon Mr. Duncan for counsel, and was sure that every wise measure would certainly receive his support.”

Mr. Duncan's devotion to the local church was but the type of his zeal for the church at large. The “*Watchman and Reflector*,” of Feb. 18, 1869, in an obituary article remarked: —

“His well-balanced mind, and calm, deliberate judgment, caused him to be sought as a valuable counsellor in the affairs of our denomination. For a long period he was an interested and active member of the American Baptist Missionary Union, and, for several years, was the chairman of its Board of Managers. For many years, also, he rendered valuable service in the Board of Trustees of the Newton Theological Institution.”

In respect to missions, he not only felt a religious interest in them, but thoroughly studied and followed them from

month to month in all their details and changes. A large part of the leisure time of the sabbath was given to reading the various missionary journals, the results of which appeared in the monthly missionary concerts of the church, as well as in the deliberations of the Union.

The following letter from Dr. BARON STOW, of Boston, to Dr. Bosworth, refers in general to Mr. Duncan as connected with the larger interests of the church:—

"The more intimate friends of the late Colonel Duncan have made me familiar with the beauty of his home-life, and caused me to admire traits of character which I never had the opportunity personally to observe. My elevated estimate of his character as a civilian was formed on the evidence I had of the esteem in which he was held by those who confided to him an unusual number of public trusts. From those who knew him best, and who were ever glad to avail themselves of his services, I have uniformly heard testimony of the most favorable kind. On no occasion did I ever hear his name mentioned in connection with any principle or party or measure that could have wounded or mortified me had he been my own brother. The first ungenerous word respecting him, I never heard spoken. He stood among public men equally free from those extravagant laudations which provoke envy, and those unfriendly suspicions and implications which create prejudice. His escape from these opposite evils was owing especially to his characteristic modesty and to his freedom from every thing like assumption of superiority or claim to leadership. For many years I was associated with him in boards of trust, and had good opportunities to see, not only how he demeaned himself, but also how he was regarded by his fellow-officials. Decided and firm in his opinions, he had

nothing of the turbulent agitator, or scheming demagogue, or noisy debater. His words were few, and more convincing than exciting. His temper was cool, his manner calm, his way from premises to conclusions direct and luminous. What he was in the Board of Managers of the Missionary Union and in the Board of Trustees of the Newton Theological Institution, you know full well. In neither of those boards did you ever know him to say or do an unwise thing. If his opinions did not always prevail, they always carried weight and commanded respect. If he contended earnestly, it was never contentiously, but always for such principles or measures as he had deliberately examined and believed to be defensible at the bar of both reason and conscience. He had a large share of Christian conservatism, and could not easily be induced to countenance any theories or practices that savored of radicalism. He was a good hater of every thing precipitate, rash, or tortuous. As a member of the Board of Fellows of Brown University, he had frequent occasion to grapple with perplexing problems, and never did I see him unequal to the exigency. He understood his position, and appreciated his responsibilities. His record of service in that body will bear investigation, and will show how steadfast he uniformly was to his convictions of the right and the true."

The following action was taken by the American Baptist Missionary Union, at the time of Mr. Duncan's decease:—

The Executive Committee have learned, with profound regret, that the Hon. James H. Duncan, of Haverhill, Mass., died on the 8th instant, at the age of seventy-five.

He was long a member of the Board of Managers of the American Baptist Missionary Union, and for several years its Chairman. By his fellow-citizens, he was elevated to many positions of public

"We were speaking several days ago of Mr. Duncan's method of conducting family prayers, and M. remarked she never should forget the impressive manner in which he read the Bible: never had she heard any one equal him in expression and modulation, and the silvery tones of his voice sound in my ears to this moment. The universal kindness and cordiality in his every-day life spoiled one for the usual indifference of persons in general."

The Rev. JOSEPH MAY, of Newburyport, writes: —

"I always felt it well-spent time when I was with him, both for his practical wisdom and experience, and for the undertone of moral worth which is what really commands respect above all other things. Especially I admired his simple, childlike religiousness, and enjoyed the genuineness of his devotions in your home, which I always remember very soothingly. That again is an office which few men discharge so as to affect me as I crave to be affected. It is sweet and dear to one's heart when it is real. In your father's prayers there was always to me that quality, — a filial spirit and reverence that made them very impressive. I feel it a great privilege to have known him, and known him at home."

A relative of the family relates the following incident: —

"I was at Mr. Duncan's house on the morning of his son's departure for the army of the Mississippi; also, in singular coincidence, on the evening of the day of his return after a long and eventful absence. Immediately after breakfast, according to the custom of the family, all assembled in the sitting-room; and, after the usual reading of Scripture, they kneeled for the morning prayer of the head of the family. It would seem that the moment of parting with a son for distant service before the enemy would have caused

utterance in that prayer of those contending emotions, which will struggle in the bosoms of us poor mortals in the face of the contingencies which must forebode at such a parting: no, not so did the fond parent address his Father in Heaven. In that invocation, the son was nobly and cheerfully dedicated to his country. The supplication was all for the nation, and then followed a trust, — a hearty, reliant, certain trust in Him who is the God of battles. Throughout that prayer there was no breath of fear, or betrayal of those emotions which none but an heroic, God-fearing, right-spirited man could repress at such a time.

"It is not necessary to speak of the interval before the return. There was a return in honor, in renewed health, in promise; and the joyful family met at the same altar for thanksgiving to God. But what of the father who led their devotions! I see him now, on his bended knees, his head bowed low between his hands: I cannot recall the words. There are prayers, like this one, in which all is gathered up in a single offering: the soul feels to the inmost sense its entireness of dedication; but so quietly asserted, that it knows not the way and manner of speech thereof. This I do remember: Mr. Duncan was moved with contrition in a spirit of deepest humility; for in his great joy he did not know why God had been so merciful to him, had spared so much to him a sinner.

"How just, how wise, how deeply religious was the high sense of the relation between the creature and the Creator, in the aspirations of these two prayers!"

We introduce here a few stanzas from the father to his eldest daughter, called out by a child's effort to cheer him when depressed. She was rewarded the next morning by these lines, precious to her as the only effort made by her father to express his thoughts in verse: —

Daughter ! thy love would lift
From off my burdened breast
The cares which press my spirits down,
And rob me of my rest.

Amid life's toilsome path,
Can aught our cares remove,
And, while we live and act on earth,
Exalt our thoughts above ?

Yes : Faith can pierce the veil
Which wraps our mortal sight,
Reveal those heavenly scenes where
God sits throned in light.

And while we labor here,
With grief and cares opprest,
Hope keeps our fainting spirits up,
Faith points to endless rest.

Daughter ! thy words of love and truth
My troubled thoughts do calm :
And may that faith keep thy
Young heart from every ill and harm.

The severest trials of Mr. Duncan were the loss of three adult children in the brief period of three years and four months. In the spring of 1855, consumption showed itself in Susan, then just eighteen, and in the promise of a future bright for herself and her friends. In her, beauty of person was heightened by rare loveliness of disposition. She possessed a mind vigorous and active, which had been well cultivated by reading and study, an excellent judgment, great natural vivacity, a dignity and earnestness of character which had been confirmed and strengthened by the sanctifying in-

fluences of religious faith and the early consecration of herself to the Saviour. She lingered until February, 1857, illustrating, through all these months of weariness and suffering, the sustaining power of a Christian faith, shedding over the home circle an influence precious and enduring.

Soon after, his son James, who had graduated at Brown University in 1849, began to fail in health. His beautiful filial character and his promise as a man of business had already led Mr. Duncan to lean upon him, and his slow decline was watched with heart-breaking sorrow. He died Dec. 31, 1858, during the passage to the Barbadoes, where he was going in search of health. Mr. Duncan, in a letter to an absent daughter, refers to his death thus:—

“I was not aware how highly he was esteemed in the community till his decease. The universal and sincere expressions of sorrow are a grateful tribute to his memory. He never made any efforts to win the public favor, but a uniformly courteous, frank, upright, and manly deportment gained him universal confidence and regard. In looking back upon his life, I can find no act to fix the slightest stain upon his character. He was my hope, my stay and staff, and his death creates a void which can never be filled.”

From this severe blow to his affection and hopes, Mr. Duncan never fully rallied. Though he at once took up again the burdens of life which he had hoped would be borne by another, it was with an abiding sense of sorrow and loss.

In 1860, the family was again called to great affliction by the very sudden death of their daughter Rose, on the 20th

of June, while at school in Hudson, N.Y. Her illness was so brief and unalarming, that the family at home were scarcely awakened to anxiety before they heard of her death. As James had been regarded as the stay of the household, so Rose was looked upon as its joy. Beautiful in person, full of wit and vivacity, amiable and affectionate, while almost saintly in the fervor of her piety, she was more than loved by her father: she filled his ideal of female character. In a letter to his daughter Mrs. Harris, then in Texas, he thus refers to his loss: —

"These oft-repeated afflictions almost crush me. I have felt the loss of James every way. My hopes and enjoyment of life were greatly diminished by his death; but Rose was very near my heart. She was so bright, so kind, so unselfish, so affectionate, so sprightly, that her presence was a perpetual joy. She was always good from childhood; we seldom, if ever, had occasion to correct or reprove her; and, since the age of fifteen, when she made a profession of religion, she has evinced a consistency of piety remarkable at any age. In her, vivacity and discretion were most happily blended. She possessed talents of a high order. She enjoyed society, especially that of the cultivated and refined; but it was not essential to her enjoyment of life. She found happiness in reading, in study, in music, and, above all, in nature, for whose beauties she had a keen perception. She was ever ready and desirous to do good; and entered on any work, which enlisted her feelings, with an energy truly remarkable. We were prepared, by a long period of sickness, to anticipate dear Susan's death; and James's health had been so precarious, that we feared he might fall a victim to his malady, although the time and manner were most

unlooked for : but Rose is arrested full of hope, of happiness, and of apparent health. Were it not for the hopes which religion inspires, I should sink under this stroke, — so sad, so sudden, — in the midst of so many delightful anticipations. But a voice comes to me from the excellent glory, ‘Weep not for me: I am with the angels, and behold the face of my Redeemer.’ The loved one we mourn is now enjoying the society of angels and glorified spirits, with the capacity for happiness which she possessed on earth infinitely enlarged and purified. Only a deep-seated acquiescence in the Divine sovereignty, — a conviction that the Judge of all the earth will do right, — that his dealings, however dark to us, are guided by infinite wisdom and mercy, — can keep me from murmuring at this inscrutable providence. No consolation in such a bereavement as this can be found but in the promises contained in the divine word. I fervently commend you to God and the word of his grace, praying that you may be sustained and comforted.”

These repeated afflictions, though they left ineffaceable marks upon Mr. Duncan’s mind, were no trial to his faith, nor were they suffered to cast a lasting gloom over his life. He at once bowed himself under the hand of God, acknowledged that it was well, and drew fully upon the consolations of the gospel.

He never lost the zest of life. There was nothing ascetic either in his temperament or religion. He took liberal and healthy views of life, and enjoyed its good things with a thorough, rational pleasure. He was generous in all provisions for his household; not merely as to the manner of meeting their wants, but in providing for their happiness. He often took them upon journeys, prepared the way for

them in society abroad, and, as far as possible, made his own house the scene of cultivated social enjoyment, — entering into it himself with the keenest relish. This was not done out of mere indulgence: it entered into his plan of rearing a family. He provided enjoyment for his children, instead of leaving them to seek it for themselves. His wisdom is apparent, so far, at least, that in his large family no moral wreck has occurred; and all the children were early united with their parents in earnest Christian views of life.

The hospitality of Mr. Duncan was one of the most marked features of his home-life. The house was scarcely ever without guests. Its ample size and his generous manner of living made it possible to offer such attentions to others, while the heartiness and grace with which they were accompanied rendered them most enjoyable. This hospitality was not the mere reciprocation of society. His doors were open alike to friends and strangers. If the town, or any religious or secular interest, could be served by his hospitality, it was proffered without stint. His house was regarded as the temporary home of public speakers, lecturers, clergymen, and all others to whom hospitality seemed due. Before the family circle was broken by death, it was not unusual for eighteen or twenty persons to sit down at dinner.

The grace and tact and dignity with which Mr. Duncan entertained, is remembered by multitudes. Still, he did not suffer himself to spend upon these social amenities any very large part of his time. He was through life an intensely

busy man. The Rev. Dr. Train, in his remarks at the funeral service, which unfortunately are not preserved, said that when he came to Haverhill, in 1836, and became, for eighteen months, an inmate of his family, "Mr. Duncan seemed to him the busiest man he had ever known. He had a large practice as a lawyer; he was extensively engaged in farming; he was a selectman, and often a representative in the legislature; he was a bank-director; he was largely connected with the railroad then slowly pushing its way towards Haverhill; he was superintendent of the Sunday-school, and had much to do with the details of the business of the church. But these labors did not weigh him down, nor take from the freshness and elasticity of his spirits." This pressure relaxed somewhat in later years; still his days were always given to business. The evening, however, usually found him at leisure for the enjoyment of his family and guests, or attending the church-meeting, or the reading of some valuable book. He preserved his literary taste amidst the cares of business, and confined his reading to books of a substantial and standard character. He wrote often and at length to the absent members of the family. These letters, carefully written and full of advice, with apt accounts of the home-life, are now precious treasures to his children.

During the last few years, the Monday-Evening Club — an association of gentlemen in Haverhill and Bradford — was a source of great pleasure to him. Though the oldest member, he was the most punctual and constant in attendance; and none entered more thoroughly and heartily into its social

and literary enjoyments. At the first meeting held after his death, the following resolutions were adopted: —

Resolved, That the sudden death of our brother, the Hon. James H. Duncan, the oldest member of the Club, impresses us with deep sorrow.

Resolved, That we esteemed him a brother of sterling integrity, of elevated Christian character, and of rare social qualities; that we witnessed with great pleasure his constantly increasing interest in our Club; that we entertained for him the highest consideration and respect; that we mourn for him as a loss to us, his friends, and the public; and that we shall ever warmly cherish his memory for his personal worth, and as an active and efficient member of the Club.

Resolved, That while we tenderly sympathize with Mrs. Duncan and her afflicted family in the loss of one so dear to them, as husband, father, and friend, we are truly grateful that they have the consolation afforded by the assurance that the exchange of worlds was to the departed an endless gain.

Mr. Duncan was also an interested member of the Baptist Social Union, — a club of gentlemen who met socially in Boston, to confer upon the interests of the Baptist denomination. It adopted these resolutions: —

Resolved, That in the departure from this world of our esteemed friend and brother in Christ, Hon. James H. Duncan, whose death has been announced to us this evening, we mourn the loss of a truly good man and faithful laborer in the vineyard of the Master; that while we sorrow that we shall see his face no more in the flesh, we are comforted by the blessed assurance he has left

with us, that he has entered upon the rest which remaineth for the people of God.

Resolved. That in his life we recognize a bright example of continuance in well-doing, especially of fidelity to public trusts, and of rare consecration to the interests of humanity, literature, and religion: and that by this act we desire to express our gratitude to God, who permitted him to live so long, and to die crowned with the benedictions of all, both in the church and the world, with whom he had been associated.

Resolved. That we tender to his bereaved widow and family our warmest sympathies: and that we assure them of our prayers, that this dispensation of Providence may be sanctified to their good.

Resolved. — That these Resolutions be entered upon the records of this Union: and that a copy, signed by the President and Secretary, be sent to the family of the deceased.

The testimonials, of which this memorial is largely composed, and which it is mainly intended to preserve, touch the chief points of Mr. Duncan's career and character. Still they but faintly indicate how thoroughly his life was subordinated to the one idea of *fidelity to duty*. This was not merely a purpose taken up and followed, but was inwrought into the very substance of his character. It was the underlying element that supported and entered into all his traits of mind and habits of conduct. It was the key-note to his life.—the principle from which he habitually acted. Unless it is fully recognized, his character offers a somewhat strange and seemingly opposite combination of traits. He was modest and shrinking, yet he showed the truest courage.

His temperament was quick and impulsive, but it seldom bore him into excesses. His emotions apparently governed him, but in reality judgment held the reins. He was somewhat distant and reserved in manner, but there was a law of love in his heart that made him full of sympathy and affection. Of himself, he tended to the care of minor matters; but his career — opened by his talents, but entered from a sense of duty — shows that his true sphere was amidst large interests. His tastes led him to privacy, but he heeded the call to serve the public. He managed his own affairs with less wisdom than those entrusted to him. In fact, Mr. Duncan showed no superior ability except when under the inspiration of duty. He was eloquent and wise and great, just in the degree in which his moral faculties were moved by a sense of moral accountability. He would never have been thought a man of courage, except when courage was specially demanded. His gentle and considerate manner would not have suggested his unflinching will, had not occasion made it manifest. All his faculties, tastes, dispositions were under the lead of duty; and the fixed nature of this relation was not only the most marked feature of his character, but so informed the whole, and led him into such spheres of activity, that there may be said of him what Tacitus said of Agricola: "*Bonum virum facile crederes, magnum libenter.*"

The death of Mr. Duncan was the occasion of a large number of letters to the family, some of which are introduced, both because of the comfort they afford, and as indicating the various yet uniform estimate in which he was held.

HON. WILLIAM WILLIS, of Portland, Me., writes to his sister, Mrs. Duncan:—

"Bereavements of this sad nature leave wounds on our hearts, especially our aged ones, which never heal. Memories of the past, extending over more than forty years, must keep these wounds continually open, and you will ever find a void there which nothing can fill. It must be a consoling reflection to you, that, during these long years, retrospection will plant no thorn in your memory, or cast a cloud over the serene horizon of your happy union.

"In retracing my earliest recollections of Mr. Duncan, extending back seventy years, I can recall no act which dims the lustre of his pure life: he was a model boy, as he was a model man. At Exeter and at Harvard, as well as in his professional and political life, diligence in study, correctness in deportment, purity in character, honesty and integrity, insured to him the commendation of the teachers of his youth, and the unqualified approbation of the companions and friends of his mature years. I think I have never known a person, who, through a whole and so long a life, sustained a character so uniformly correct and worthy of approbation.

"In his manners he was a little formal and reserved, perhaps, towards strangers, 'but to those men who sought him, sweet as summer.' He was never haughty on the one hand, nor too familiar or supercilious on the other. A cultivated intelligence, an enlightened conscience, and a sound judgment, graced by polished manners, constitute a character—too rare in our days—which should be held up as an example and ornament to the community.

"Of his domestic life I forbear to speak in this presence: a man of such sterling qualities could not fail to shed over the

charmed circle of private life any other than the soft light which flows from a well-balanced moral character.

"Few of his classmates now remain. Andrews and Brooks, of Boston; Downes, of Calais, and Nourse, of Bath, old men all, still survive: but there have gone before him, of the eminent associates of his class, Dexter, Homans, and Loring of Boston, Bishop Wainwright and the beloved Henry Ware. Thus, one after another, the ties so cherished on earth are parted, to be reunited in that higher and better world, which knows no parting, nor sorrow, nor tears."

From Prof. GEORGE B. JEWETT, of Salem:—

"Allow me to express to you my sincere thanks for the copy of the Memorial Sermon with which you have so kindly favored me. It is eminently fitting that a life so redolent of Christian excellence and beauty,—a life which speaks so impressively of all that is lovely, and of good report, and truly worthy of imitation,—should be thus perpetuated. Its commemoration redounds to the praise of divine grace.

"The hour with which Mr. Duncan favored me on the afternoon of the sabbath which I spent in Haverhill, last fall, will long be held by me in most grateful remembrance. The frankness and kindness of his remarks impressed me most deeply. I felt assured that the work * in which I was engaged must be a good one, if it met the cordial approval of a mind so capable of estimating it in all its bearings, and of a heart so sensitive to the interests of the Redeemer's cause. Now that he has gone to his high reward, I rejoice to be one of the many to whom is granted the privilege of pronouncing a blessing on his memory."

* A criticism upon a recent revised edition of the New Testament.

From Surgeon-General DALE:—

"You can judge of my emotion when, upon opening the 'Advertiser' of yesterday, in the cars, I saw the announcement of the death of your honored and venerated father, my lamented friend. I had not even heard of his illness; and it is only a short time since I paid my respects to him in the cars, as he was on his way to Boston. It will be a melancholy satisfaction to myself and family to meet with kindred and friends in paying a sincere and heartfelt tribute of respect to the memory and virtues of one of the most distinguished citizens of the Commonwealth.

"The late Hon. Mr. Duncan seems to have been the last of that school of gentlemen in our country, whose public character, patriotism, and loyalty survived the mutations of party; entitling him, in a ripe old age, to the rare distinction of a safe counsellor and an unselfish citizen, anxious only for the public good.

"In the deep grief of your venerable mother and family there must be left this consolation and support, that, living to an advanced age, he yet retained a physical and mental vigor rarely seen; and perhaps he is mercifully spared those infirmities which are common to extreme age."

The Rev. EDWARD G. PORTER writes:—

"Although my acquaintance with your father was but slight, I saw him enough to know how great a loss you are now called to sustain. I well remember his large-hearted Christian hospitality, which it was my privilege to share one Sunday evening, when Dr. Dodge was in Haverhill. No one could see your father at home without being impressed with the combined force and gentleness of his character, which so fully exemplified the spirit of the Gospel as to win the esteem and affection of all that knew him. Permit

me to say, that the memory of such a father, who was spared to you so long, is an occasion of such gratitude to God that your hearts might reasonably dwell, not so much on what you have lost, as on what he has gained. I hope some one will, at the proper time, give the public an appreciative sketch of that long, useful, and honored life now brought to a close."

Prof. A. N. ARNOLD, D.D., of Chicago, writes: —

"I must claim the privilege of condoling with you in your great grief. You have often been called to weep over dear departed ones, but this sorrow is different from any of the past. Those may have seemed more untimely, but this is more irreparable. Yet, however you may have wished it delayed, you cannot wish it less. The greatness of your loss is a part of your consolation, and the more fully you can appreciate it, the more reason you have for submission and gratitude; for you must consider how much greater the loss of such a father would have been, if it had occurred when his children were less capable of appreciating it. Permit me to remind you that it would be wrong and selfish to mourn without moderation that he has reached the goal of his best hopes and aspirations. You must not repine that he has found what you were proud to see him so steadfastly seeking, — the satisfaction and perfection of his nature. I have the distinct impression — derived I hardly know from what testimony — that his Christian character, always consistent, shone forth with brightening lustre in the last few years. It should be so always, but it is not as manifestly so with all, as I believe it was with him."

The following comprehensive estimate of Mr. Duncan's character is from the Rev. S. F. SMITH, D.D.: —

"My acquaintance with Mr. Duncan has been long and intimate. I have seen him under all relations, in various circumstances, and in every kind of exigency calculated to bring into action the distinguishing qualities of his mind and heart. His ardent and enlightened patriotism I have never seen surpassed. During the years of confusion and excitement which preceded the war of the rebellion, his quick, keen eye detected the bearing of public measures, and carefully watched the movements of artful politicians. And not satisfied with doing his duty to his country in her public councils only, he perpetually carried the case of our national necessities in supplication before God. As a statesman he was distinguished by firmness of principle, Christian conscientiousness, and the most incorruptible integrity. He had carefully reflected on all matters of national interest, and was controlled in his official acts by convictions which were the result of calm investigation and mature judgment. Always in his place, ever attentive to the course of business, he fulfilled his duties as a representative of his native district in a manner that gave no cause for the slightest breath of reproach. Actuated by a wise conservatism, he still understood the spirit of the age, and was ever in the party of true progress. He passed unscathed through the temptations of the national capital, always respected, and always worthy of respect; in no case compromising his personal dignity as a man, nor his nobility of character as a sincere and conscientious Christian. When the dread collision came, he understood fully the exigencies of the times. He cherished no vindictive spirit towards the enemies of freedom, but condemned their action, and stood for the demands of justice and national honor. In the quiet hour of family devotion, how often did he bear the weighty sorrow of his patriotic heart, the distresses of his beloved country, humbly and trustingly

before God! Often, at such hours, I have been inclined to say, 'This is true patriotism, a love of country which can safely be submitted to any ordeal.'

"There was something beautiful in his relations to his home. His house was the abode of generous and graceful hospitality. He had the faculty of making his guests feel how welcome they were under his roof. His relations to his own family were very tender. Firm, prompt, and decided, he was still loving, confiding, and just. And, as his children either grew to years of discretion, or were taken, one by one, to the higher home, his gentle consideration, his unwearied love, his admission to his counsels and his heart of the living, and his quiet resignation, his unquestioning 'even so, Father,' in giving to the will of God the dead, — proclaimed him like another faithful Abraham in his household.

"The claims of religion he held paramount to all others. Though often wearied by the toils of the day, he admitted no excuse for absenting himself from the meetings of the church at evening. He was wise in counsel, but never obtrusive. He listened with candor. He comforted with words of encouragement. His religion was not a transient fervor, but a steady heat. In his religious self-manifestation, there was nothing sensational, nothing one-sided; nothing that seemed to flow from casual impulse, or that tended to temporary results. He held the doctrines of grace as they were held and taught by the New-England fathers. His religious development was harmonious and symmetrical, and he was therefore felt to be a power in the church and in the community. His brethren wisely confided in his judgment; and rarely, if ever, did they feel that their confidence had been misplaced.

"As the members of the Church of which, from the hour of his Christian profession, he was a pillar and an ornament, so also his

fellow-citizens leaned on him as a strong support. They prized his influence. They waited for his counsel. Always living in his native town, he felt himself identified with all its interests, and he watched over them with unceasing solicitude and love. No public measure of importance was adopted, for nearly half a century, of which he was not a part; there was no public exhibition of public spirit and enterprise, tending to the prosperity of the town of Haverhill, of which he did not show himself a prudent and far-seeing adviser and a generous promoter. Often, in their town meetings, will his fellow-citizens miss his calm foresight, his wise direction, his liberal plans, and his prompt administration.

"He was deeply interested in the benevolent organizations of the denomination to which he belonged, and was repeatedly elected as the presiding officer of some of them. But he was distinguished by his love for the work of missions to the heathen, and kept himself familiar with the progress of the work. He was several times called to the honorable office of Chairman of the Board of Managers of the American Baptist Missionary Union. He filled this office with dignity and urbanity; entering upon it with a heart full of love to the cause, and feeling that he sustained the same relations and obligations to it as the whole body of his brethren. His words at the anniversary meetings were always appropriate, judicious, calm, and dignified. And the parliamentary experience and skill which he had acquired in the halls of Congress, he gracefully brought, an offering to his brethren and to Christ, and a useful aid to the cause of foreign missions. It was a beautiful circumstance, that, on his last sabbath evening, — enfeebled as he was by the pressure of disease, and just as death was gathering its dark shadows around him, — he aroused himself sufficiently to intimate that he remembered that it was the occasion of the mis-

sionary concert. Just as life was lapsing into the glories of immortality, he recalled his former interest in the efforts for the salvation of a fallen world, and left it as a parting memorial to his children and his brethren, that his latest thoughts of earth lingered on the inspired petition — 'Thy Kingdom come.'

"He was honored with many responsible offices and important trusts, religious and secular, and in the discharge of these duties he always proved himself competent and faithful. In his position as a member of the Corporation of Brown University, and of the Board of Trustees of the Newton Theological Institution, he took pains to understand the exigencies of every occasion, to comprehend the nature and the merits of every question, and to discharge to the full his responsibility.

"When he approached the age of seventy, he wisely remembered his days, and began to contemplate the necessity of nature, which would soon compel him to relinquish the labors and responsibilities of this life. Very often did he allude to his age, as indicating the propriety of his diminishing his worldly cares and turning his thoughts heavenward. His characteristic activity, which seemed altogether beyond what is customary in a person so far advanced, continued almost to the very close of his earthly career. Scarcely was he missed from the scenes of his usual activity when the people were startled by the assurance that he had passed away. Scarcely was he absent from his place in the house of God, when the solemn announcement was spread abroad that he 'was not, for God had taken him.' And so he departed, full of years and of honors. He manifested, as he drew near the close of life, the mellow beauty and ripeness of age, though with none of its tokens of decay. It was like the setting of the sun on a summer evening, — the same luminary that shone in his glory

at noonday, now none the less glorious, though grown more mild, serene, and beautiful.

“The streets were thronged to watch the funeral procession on the day of his burial. All felt that not only had a great man fallen in Israel, but that they themselves had lost a wise counselor, a stay and staff, and a friend. And when at the grave, the clouds which, during the afternoon, had shed over the ground a bridal covering of spotless white, temporarily parted, and allowed the sun to dart a beam of glory upon the earth, — it was the dictate not more of imagination than of confident faith, to view the scene as the symbol of the white robe of Christ’s righteousness which he had put on, and of the glory revealed to his ascended spirit.”

V.

LAST DAYS.

MR. DUNCAN'S last illness was brief, and its fatal termination was a surprise to all. Although he was seventy-five years old, he bore no marks of age. His step was elastic, his voice was clear and strong as ever; his countenance was fresh and smooth, and indicated twenty years less of age than the fact. His health had never been better than during the past few years.

On Monday, Feb. 1, he went to Boston, and, on his return, complained of dizziness and headache, but was not so ill as to prevent him from attending a temperance meeting in the evening, held in the City Hall. The motive that took Mr. Duncan to this meeting was characteristic of him,—a generous willingness to hear the prohibitory law advocated, the expediency of which he doubted. Here his cold was aggravated. On Tuesday, he attended to business as usual, but in the evening experienced a chill, and retired early, taking simple restoratives. On Wednesday, he kept to his room as a matter of prudence. His physician, Dr. J. P. Whittemore, was called; and symptoms of pneumonia were discovered by him. But the disease, alarming as it was in itself, seemed of so mild a type, that danger was not appre-

hended. At no time during the remainder of the week did he appear very ill to those about him: he suffered but little, was cheerful, and enjoyed the presence of the family in his room. But the physician saw that the congestion was steadily extending throughout his lungs. The usual remedies were promptly employed at each stage of the disease, but nothing hindered its course. Still, his great vitality, the apparent soundness of his constitution, and, more than all, the fact that his mother had safely passed through two such attacks when beyond his age, favored the hope of recovery. He had no sense of his danger, and on Friday spoke of his intention of going to Washington to attend the Inauguration of Gen. Grant. On Sunday the full power of the disease became evident. He was restless, breathed with difficulty, and his mind wandered at frequent intervals. During the night he rapidly failed. His son-in-law spent the entire night at his bedside, endeavoring to calm his intense excitement and delirium, hoping he might secure rest. Though constantly wandering and talking wildly, he was easily, though but for a moment, recalled to a rational state. In these lucid intervals, all the gentleness and suavity of his usual manner reappeared with singular beauty. At dawn, he was joined by Mrs. Duncan; the morning-light was admitted, and the fearful change wrought in the night was revealed. Still, a gentle slumber, into which he fell, awoke a faint hope that possibly the disease had spent its force, and that he might yet rally. Dr. Sparhawk, of Amesbury Mills, — a relative and cherished friend of the family, — was sum-

moned in council, but his arrival, at eleven o'clock in the forenoon, found Mr. Duncan in a dying state. Toward the last, the force of his mind seemed to overpower the delirium: he brokenly expressed a sense of his situation, uttered a few sentences of prayer, murmured words of affection to his wife as she bent over him, endeavored to name the children, and at noon quietly breathed his last. There were present only members of the family and the physicians. The rapid progress of the disease had not prepared them for the issue, and it was difficult to realize that the end had actually come. Soon the sad consciousness forced itself upon them: the husband and father and friend was gone; but they felt that he had gone to God, and was "alive for evermore."

"Why weep ye then for him, who having won
The bounds of man's appointed years, at last, —
Life's blessings all enjoyed, life's labors done, —
Serenely to his final rest has passed ;
While the soft memory of his virtues yet lingers,
Like twilight hues, when the bright sun is set ?"

The announcement of his death passed rapidly through the town, and was received almost with incredulity. When the surprise passed, a general sorrow and sense of loss took possession of all hearts. Many had lost in him a loved and faithful friend, and all felt that the town had been bereaved of its most useful and honored citizen, and that his place would never be filled.

By the general urgent desire of the community, the funeral services were held in the church, instead of the house, as

was first intended. At two o'clock prayer was offered up at the house, by the Rev. Dr. Train, after which the body was borne to the First Baptist Church, Deacon John Keeley, Mr. George Appleton, and John J. Marsh, Esq., of Haverhill, and Mr. Henry S. Washburn, of Boston, acting as pallbearers. At the church the services were opened by the singing of the hymn:

“ Hear what the voice from heaven proclaims
For all the pious dead :
Sweet is the savor of their names,
And soft their sleeping bed.”

After portions of the Scriptures had been read by the Rev. Dr. Bosworth, an address was made by the Rev. Dr. Train, not of the nature of a eulogy, but composed of personal reminiscences, drawn from his long acquaintance with Mr. Duncan, that yet most vividly illustrated the main features of his character. It is felt that this Memorial is incomplete in not being able to present the beautiful and just tribute, that flowed without premeditation from his lips.

The Rev. Dr. Warren, of the Baptist Missionary Union, followed with sympathetic words, expressive of the loss that was sustained in so many relations, and read the Resolutions of the Officers of the Missionary Union, already given. The letter of the Rev. Mr. Strong, on the previous pages, also was read. After the prayer by the Rev. Dr. Bosworth, the following hymn was sung : —

“ Who, O Lord, when life is o'er,
Shall to heaven's blest mansions soar?
Who an ever welcome guest,
In Thy holy place shall rest ?

He whose heart Thy love has warmed ;
He whose will to Thine conformed,
Bids his life unsullied run ;
He whose words and thoughts are one ;

He who shuns the sinner's road,
Loving those who love their God ;
Who, with hope and faith unfeigned,
Treads the path by Thee ordained ;

He who trusts in Christ alone.
Not in aught himself hath done, —
He, Great God, shall be Thy care,
And Thy choicest blessings share."

When the services were ended, the large congregation passed across the chancel, where the body was placed, and looked for the last time upon the face that had been seen almost daily in their streets for nearly three quarters of a century. Death had left but faint impress upon those familiar features, and their deep repose within their narrow place was almost the only assurance that they were fixed in death. From the hands folded across his person in a customary way, an ivy reached upward encircling his head, faintly yet clearly speaking of the palm and the crown — the victory and the glory — that were now his. While the services continued, and as the procession moved from the church to the cemetery, places of business were generally closed, and the entire community seemed to yield to the sad truth, that their friend and townsman had for ever passed from the midst of them. When the body had been placed in the tomb, — its temporary resting-place till spring, — the Rev. Dr. S. F.

Smith offered up prayer. The snow had gently fallen during the day; but while the prayer was going up the clouds parted, and some few rays from the sun, now nearly set, struggled into the gloom of the winter day, reminding us that "light is sown for the righteous" even in the midst of death.

On Sunday, Feb. 28, the Rev. Dr. Bosworth preached a commemorative discourse, from Heb. xi. 4: "And by it he being dead yet speaketh;" — a clear and eloquent presentation of the *witnessing life* as illustrated in Mr. Duncan. It is not included in this Memorial, only because it has been already published and widely circulated.

The letters and the action of various bodies, embraced in the previous pages, indicate the affection and respect in which Mr. Duncan was held by his fellow-men. While his family have no need of such expressions to justify their own sense of him, they are tenderly grateful for the assurance that their love and veneration are so largely shared by others. They serve to strengthen the hope that they may, in some measure, perpetuate in themselves something of the influence of his faithful life. They are gathered here in a permanent form for this end.

May the God of the father be with the children, and with the children's children, to the end!



